EC/Mercosur agreement: interregional framework cooperation agreement

1995/0261(CNS) - 22/03/1999 - Final act

PURPOSE : to conclude an interregional framework cooperation Agreement between the Member States and MERCOSUR (Southern Common Market) and its Party States (Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay). COMMUNITY MEASURE : Council Decision 1999/279/EC concerning the conclusion, on behalf of the European Community, of the interregional framework cooperation agreemnt between the European Community and its Member States, of the one part, and MERCOSUR and its Party States, of the other part. CONTENT : the Agreement is concluded for an indefinite duration and aims to reinforce the existing links between the parties by laying down the conditions to the setting up of an interregional association and by intensifying the relations between the institutions of the two parties. It is based on the respect of democratic principles and human rights and is characterised by the following elements : - regular political dialogue at all levels: this will involve contacts, exchanges of information and meetings at the appropriate levels between the different authorities of the MERCOSUR and its Party States and the European Union; - commercial aspects: intensification of the relations in order to promote the increase and the diversification of exchanges and the subsequent liberalisation and progress of these exchanges. The Agreement will favour the creation of conditions to facilitate the setting up of the interregional association, taking into account the sensitivity of certain products, in conformity with the WTO. An economic and commercial dialogue is set up in order to reinforce this cooperation. Information is provided covering co-operation on agro-food standards, industrial cooperation, the recognition of conformity, customs matters, and on statistics and intellectual property; - economic section : the parties will facilitate, in respect of their mutual interest, the reciprocal expansion of their economy and the encouragement of international competitiveness. The Agreement consists of the regional treatment of all the cooperation activities. Economic co-operation will be the subject of a regular dialogue. In this framework, measures are provided on industrial, investment promotion, in the fields of energy, transport, telecommunications, scientific and technological development and in environmental protection; - to reinforce integration : the cooperation between the parties aims to support the integration processes of MERCOSUR and its Party States in all fields. The EC's system for exchanging information and technical assistance make provision to this effect. Measures are also laid down in order to encourage cooperation between the institutions of the European Union and of MERCOSUR and its Party States. - other fields of cooperation : the Agreement includes provisions that seek to improve cooperation in training and education, culture and the combat against drugs. An evolutionary clause is provided for the purpose of expanding the scope of EC /MERCOSUR cooperation. - implementation of the Agreement : a Cooperation Council is set up to supervise the good functioning of the Agreement andwill meet at ministerial level at regular intervals. ENTRY INTO FORCE OF THE AGREEMENT: 01.07.1999.